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USING FORUM THEATRE TO DEVELOP VARIOUS LEVELS OF THINKING SKILLS AMONG MORAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Purpose –The power of forum theatre in education and various field is well known by educators. However, the use of forum theatre in Malaysia, particularly in the field of moral education, is still lacking and limited. At the same time, the development of thinking skills is one of the aims of the moral education curriculum in Malaysia. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the use of forum theatre as a pedagogical tool in developing various levels of thinking skills among moral education students.

Method –This study adopted a qualitative research design and was underpinned by Bloom's revised taxonomy as the theoretical and analytical framework. A total of 14 moral education students participated in this study. Data were collected qualitatively using classroom observation, interviews, and journal writing. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyse and present the findings.

Findings –The findings of this study reveal that various theatrical activities that underpinned the four elements of forum theatre-(i) writing a script, (ii) delivering a dialogue in an anti-model play, (iii) discussion and decision-making in a forum session, and (iv) improvisation in an intervention play-show the development of students’ thinking skill level such as analysing, evaluating, and creating skills. Therefore, this study suggests that forum theatre can be used in moral education pedagogy to enhance higher order thinking skills (HOTS).

Significance – Meaningful instructional pedagogy must inspire thinking skills to foster creativity and innovation among students. This is considered an important skill in 21st century learning. Therefore, these findings are beneficial for teachers, lecturers, parents, and instructional designers to plan and implement suitable teaching methods such as forum theatre to empower and improve students’ thinking skill levels.

INTRODUCTION

Thinking skills are implemented in all schools through pedagogical and curriculum aspects across all subjects including moral education (Moral Education Syllabus for Secondary School, 2000). Individual moral action depends on the capabilities of reasoning and decision making, as morality is basically a “law of reasoning” (Kohlberg, 1980, 1984). Therefore, teaching practices, pedagogy, and teaching strategies are an important component in ensuring that the moral content delivered by teachers in the classroom stimulates students’ thinking skills (Vishalache, 2011). According to Varutharaju and Ratnavadivel (2014), facilitators play a crucial role in engaging learners with a higher order thinking modality and makes students’ thinking visible by utilizing metacognition and self-regulation abilities.

Moral education programs in Malaysia focus on nurturing the spirituality, moral thinking, and moral strength of students through appreciating and practicing the values of Malaysian society (Moral Education Syllabus, 2000). The program also aims to produce individuals who have a moral and social obligation to the thinking, decisions, and actions taken (Moral Education Syllabus, 2000). Decisions and individual moral actions of students depend on the capabilities of thinking and reasoning in situations of moral conflict (Colby & Kohlberg, 2011). Moral reasoning can also be defined as the process of an individual to reach an informed decision about what should be done in a moral dilemma (Rest, 1979).

Many studies have shown a relationship between aspects of moral reasoning, moral thinking, and moral behaviour (Blasi, 1980; Colby & Kohlberg, 2011). Studies in Malaysia have also shown that moral reasoning among Form 4 students in some schools can be enhanced by the use of moral dilemmas (Jeevajoithi, 1997), the use of *Vignet* dilemmas (Chang, 2007), and effective teaching pedagogy (Loganathan, 1995; Tan, 2001). The findings of Mohd Zailani Mohd Yusoff (2012) show that the dimension of trust and faith, intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions in terms of Islamic inclination, has a significant impact on the moral reasoning of religious school students.

According to Dewey (1909) and Freire (1972), teaching is more effective when it uses real events to address the problems of real people in their relationships with the world. A review by Vishalache (2009) also showed that the *real-life dilemmas* used in teaching moral education in schools help student deal with real moral conflicts in their daily lives. This implies that developing as a moral agent involves moral reasoning or judgments when making decisions on what they ought to do and how to act upon them.

A more competent and creative pedagogical form is needed to stimulate students to think. This creative kind of pedagogy needs to be embedded in the form of teaching techniques that can nurture students' thinking skills to higher levels. Forum theatre introduced by Boal (2006, 2008) is a technique rooted in real moral conflicts experienced by students in their lives. Forum theatre could provide opportunities for students involved in thinking processes in the classroom (Nadarajan Thambu, 2017). Forum theatre is an interactive teaching and learning technique that requires students to actively participate in developing a script, memorizing, engaging in forums, acting, and expressing ideas.

Forum theatre provides the conditions in which both students and teachers are actively, critically, and reflectively engaged in thinking and knowledge-making (Nadarajan Thambu & Muhammad Hasbi Abdul Rahman, 2017). This interactive teaching technique can provide students with cognitive engagement opportunities, examine critical conflicts of morality, and seek solutions to problems (Day, 2002; Rae, 2013).

LEVEL OF THINKING SKILLS

Thinking skills are the ability to apply knowledge, skills, and values (Anderson Krathwohl, 2001) in reasoning and reflecting to solve problems, make decisions, innovate, and create something (Ministry of Education, 2013). A framework that is still considered very useful among educators is Bloom's Taxonomy (1956). Bloom qualitatively translated the thought process and classified the levels of thinking into six complex cognitive stages (Som & Mohd Razali, 1998; Tajularipin Sulaiman, 2017). The six stages (or levels of thought) are: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom, 1956).

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) was revised and modified by his pupil Lorin Anderson (2001) in accordance with current requirements to be more relevant to students and teachers. Changes were in the arrangement and the labelling of each level as verbs rather than nouns to reflect the thinking process. Rankings in the Anderson and Krathwohl Taxonomy (2001) begin with remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating. Ashton (1988) classifies the analysing, evaluating, and creating stages as higher order thinking skills (HOTS).

In the Anderson and Krathwohl Taxonomy (2001), analysing skills requires pupils to divide or convert something large to smaller components.

Students will brainstorm concepts, information, and ideas to simple and concise components. Evaluation skills are the ability to make judgments or justifications based on criteria and standards through examination and criticism. Students must justify, assess, recommend, determine, judge, suggest, and select. Meanwhile, creating skills are the skills to put together different elements to form a coherent (integrated) or fully functional system. This includes reorganizing different elements into a new pattern or structure through generation, planning, or production. Students must create, design, plan, create, construct, and imagine (Zohar & Dori, 2003).

FORUM THEATRE

Forum theatre is formed from two words, “theatre” and “forum.” *Theatre* means a genre of art or a form of communication. *Forum* is derived from the Greek term meaning an open discussion field. The goal of the forum theatre is to give the opportunity to the actors and the audience to express publicly and receive views on the issues presented. This interactive theatre was developed by Augusto Boal of Brazil (Babbage, 2004). In the forum theatre, the actors will dramatize social problems or “oppression” that occurs in the community for the community’s views (Flores, 2000; Babbage, 2004). Forum theatre will end with an unresolved problem. Then, the audience (spectators) are given the opportunity to explore solutions to the above problems through play. Forum theatre is widely used in schools to address the issue of racism, sexual prejudice, violence, and bullying (Cooper, 2004; Schonmann, 2005).

Teaching and facilitation of moral education in schools should be based on stimulus materials such as situations of moral dilemma (Colby & Kohlberg, 2011). In forum theatre, a situation of moral dilemma is presented to stimulate students’ thinking and ideas to solve the dilemma. This stimulating material (anti-model acting) is capable of developing critical and creative individual moral thinking. Students then solve problems or moral dilemmas that are revealed through the intervention play. In this context, students use high-level thinking skills such as application, analysing, evaluation, and creation. In addition, the whole technique of forum theatre is based on the concept of active learning.

The following is a discussion of student participation in all of the four steps of forum theatre and a detailed account of how the student used them and how it all worked out in the moral education classroom to enhance thinking skills. The four steps involved in the forum theatre techniques are (a) develop a script, (b) anti-model play, (c) forum, and (d) intervention play.

Develop a Script

In this step, students are asked to develop a script based on their own experiences related to lesson/topic being taught in moral education. The focus was “moral conflict,” and the scenario could be almost any topic that resonated with a moral dilemma (Boal, 2008; McClimens & Scott, 2007). In this study, the participants collaborated in developing a script about their shared

challenges. Participants wrote five scripts to demonstrate a moral dilemma and the problems causing conflict in their daily lives: Script A (conflicts existed when executing a “group study” among classmates; Unit 1.4—Responsible), Script B (conflict between neighbours/medical doctor and sick neighbour; Unit 1.9—Affection), Script C (family conflict in maintaining their children’s marital customs; Unit 2.3—Traditions and Heritage), Script D (husband-wife conflicts; Unit 5.2—Women’s Rights); and Script E (conflict in business between two tailors; Unit 6.2—Tolerance).

Anti-model Play

After composing the script, students had to act out the script developed earlier. The developed script was acted out by the students for class viewing. Their moral conflict scene was performed as an “anti-model” play. Boal (2008) created the term “anti-model” play because it is not the model we want to follow but the model we need to change. It is compulsory for the scene (anti-model play) performed to display moral conflict or pressure situations in which a character being victimized or in dilemma fails to overcome the persecution. The objective of this session is to stimulate the audience to act or intervene in the problem they see.

The Forum

In forum theatre, the facilitator of the action is the Joker. The Joker discusses with the audience the problems that appear in the presentation, and possible solutions are proposed to overcome the above problems. The Joker then asks the audience to figure out the right solution or idea that can be implemented to resolve the conflict experienced by the oppressed characters in the play. Discussion, improvisation, and audience participation is known as a “forum” in forum theatre (Gourd & Gourd, 2011).

Intervention Play

During intervention sessions, the anti-model play was presented for a second time. This time, the audience members had the opportunity to intervene and bring the play to a different and improved end. An audience member took the place of an actor to demonstrate his or her ideas for resolving a problem. They could do so by taking on the role of a specified victimized character from the anti-model play. The Joker made sure that the solutions were explored adequately by the audience members and that they were to some extent possible in real life (Boal, 2006). Through intervention play, the conflict highlighted (anti-model play) was resolved in a moral manner.

FORUM THEATRE IN DEVELOPING THINKING SKILLS?

Fisher (2003) considers the main objective of a theatre program such as forum theatre in education to encourage students to think. An educational function is to teach students about why and how to think. Therefore, we need to make the theatre pedagogy in education a component of the thinking

curriculum. The theatre program in education based on student-centred pedagogy and program focuses on “student thought.” For Fisher (2003):

The development of our minds is part of what it means to be educated, because it is part of what it means to be human. According to this view, the key function of education is to teach children to think critically, creatively, and effectively. (Fisher, 2003, p. 6)

According to Narvaez and Lapsley (2008), a moral domain should be trained to ensure skill development. In this study, forum theatre teaches actors to feel like other people, think as others think of them, and act like other people through acting. Moral behaviour can be formed by familiarizing students to feel the right thing and think of the right thing at the right time and to the appropriate person (Kristjansson, 2009). All these skills are trained through forum theatre activities like anti-model plays, forum sessions, and intervention plays. Through the intervention of acting, forum theatre provides an opportunity for participants to build a thinking, feeling, and reflection through creative problem solving. Augusto Boal (2008) argued that real and tangible action in intervention plays stimulate thinking and learning.

It also provided moral judgment skills and problem solving based on morality as claimed in the moral education syllabus (MoE Malaysia, 2000). Forum theatre showed that individuals who possess moral judgment skills have the ability to analyse when dealing with conflict situations and take appropriate decisions and actions. According to Boal (2006), a reasonable decision-making skill in real life would produce citizens who are critical thinkers. Levy (1977) stated that the rationale behind the full focus of theatre audiences is that they can think, and by over thinking they would learn. In response to a moral dilemma, the highest level of student thinking and reasoning can be elicited.

METHOD

Research Objectives

The study aim was to investigate the use of forum theatre as an instructional tool in developing various levels of thinking skills among moral education students by answering the following research question: How does forum theatre develop various levels of thinking skills?

Participants

Voluntary consent and parental consent letters were distributed to students and their parents. Only students who agreed and who were allowed by their parents were selected to participate in the study. A purposive approach to sampling was undertaken (Richards & Morse, 2007) to select the participants. Then a statement of informed consent was given to the selected participants. A total of 14 students (seven male and seven female) from two urban schools were selected. All participants were of Indian or Chinese ethnicity from a science stream moral education class (see Tables 1 and 2). Each school created

a focus group consisting of seven students per group. A letter of permission to conduct the study was previously approved by the Educational Planning and Research Division (EPRD), Ministry of Education Malaysia, State Education Department, and District Education Office.

Table 1 Profile of the Participants (School A)

Participants	Race	Gender	Area of Residence	PMR Result	Parents Occupation
Respondent 1	Chinese	Female	Urban	6A	Teacher
Respondent 2	Indian	Male	Rural	5A	Factory worker
Respondent 3	Chinese	Female	Urban	6A	Shop keeper
Respondent 4	Chinese	Male	Urban	5A	Self employed
Respondent 5	Indian	Male	Suburban	5A	Skilled worker
Respondent 6	Indian	Female	Rural	5A	Factory worker
Respondent 7	Indian	Female	Suburban	6A	Lorry Driver

Table 2 Profile of the Participants (School B)

Participants	Race	Gender	Area of Residence	PMR Result	Parents Occupation
Respondent 1	Chinese	Male	Urban	5A	Doctor (Medical)
Respondent 2	Indian	Female	Urban	6A	Teacher
Respondent 3	Chinese	Female	Suburban	6A	Self employed
Respondent 4	Chinese	Male	Urban	5A	Skilled worker
Respondent 5	Indian	Male	Rural	5A	School Clerk
Respondent 6	Indian	Female	Suburban	6A	Factory worker
Respondent 7	Chinese	Female	Urban	5A	Bank Officer

Data Collection

Basically, data sources used for this study comprised student interviews, students' reflective writings in journal entries, and observation notes. Participants were interviewed after the end of the moral education class session. Guided semi-structured interview questions were used in guiding the reflective thinking process in particular about reflecting on specific learning activities involved in forum theatre. Apart from that, participants wrote a journal on reflections and comments on their involvement in forum theatre activities at the end of the lesson in every session. Students' journals were used for analysis of their critical thinking, reflective thinking, judgments, and involvement in forum theatre.

Other sources of data came from classroom observation protocol. Data from classroom observation protocol were used to investigate students' thinking processes, decision-making, and reasoning on particular issues. The instruments for this study were developed from literature reviews and technical

literature from related sources. The items of the instruments (classroom observation, interviews, and journals) were validated by experts.

Data Analysis

Thematic techniques, as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006), were used for data analysis. A total of 20 reflective writing journals from the students and two reflective writing journals were collected from the instructor at the end of week 10. In addition, 10 transcribed interviews and 10 sets of observation notes were also collected to analyse the data. The researcher focused on analysing each answer from the data sources for analysing, evaluating, and creating thoughts. These 42 written reflections (transcripts) were then studied and analysed by researchers to determine the emerging themes. These qualitative data were analysed using *Nvivo* version 11. With the thematic techniques, the coding scheme was initially guided by the research questions, which provided the main themes and key coding. Coding was created by creating a *Node* (database) with the *Nvivo* software.

Two phases of coding (open coding and axial coding) were used in the process of identifying correlates of data in an idea, category, and theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each coding and statement obtained from the transcript source were then verified. The major categories of the coding were predetermined from the three attributes of thinking levels: analysing, evaluating, and creating. Nevertheless, small codes (or themes) were generated from the above major categories. Triangulation was used for cross-checking and verification of the data (Passi & Mishra, 2002). The findings were categorized according to several themes.

RESULTS

The aim of this study was to gain insights on how the various theatrical activities that underpinned the four elements of forum theatre—(i) developing script, (ii) anti-model play, (iii) forum, and (iv) intervention play—can develop moral education students' thinking skill levels. Several pertinent themes emerged from the data. To answer the research question of how forum theatre develops various levels of thinking skills, the reporting of the findings are organized into several themes below (see Figure 1).

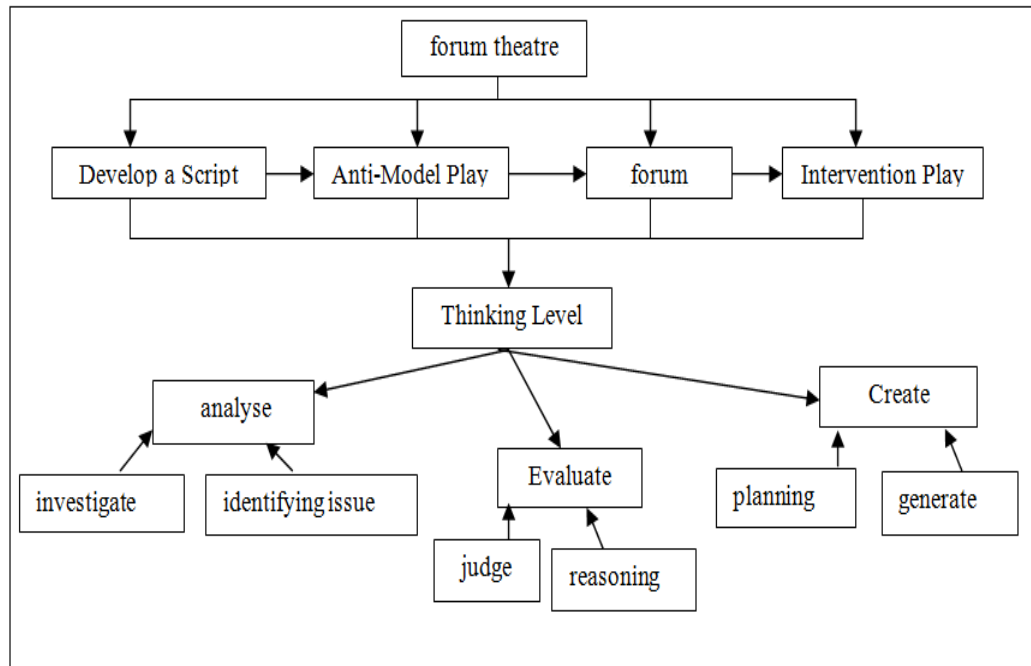


Figure 1 Student thinking levels

Theme 1: Analysing Level

Activities such as writing scripts, anti-model plays, and forum sessions in forum theatre can be used to trigger various thinking levels among participants. Features such as interpreting situations rationally in developing scripts, investigating, thinking, and identifying issues in anti-model plays and forum sessions can develop thinking skills, especially the level of analysis among the participants. The level of analysis is generated by two subthemes such as identifying issues and investigating. The following is an analysis of the findings of the two subthemes that make up Theme 1.

Identifying Issues

The results of the interviews show that the participants can identify the problems given by simplifying complex situations to a narrow focus. Participants are able to identify the issues presented in all anti-model play on the issues raised, the importance of the issue, and the impact of the issue if not resolved immediately to the self and the community. The participants will also discuss the traits that must exist in one's character and categorize them as a good character (antagonist) or evil character (protagonist). Refer to the following interviews:

Researcher: How do you analyse the anti-model play?

Participant 6:

After watching the anti-model play session (script C), we will persuade the problem that is displayed based on the characters. Usually we will analyse

the character of a person to determine a character as a good character or evil character. In this way, we can determine the issues, problems, or conflicts presented through this anti-model play. Furthermore, we have to think critically to identify the person's character.

[school B/int/19.5.18]

Researcher: What is the issue shown in script C?

Participant 1:

In script C (anti-model play) is a child issue that violates the customs and heritage of their ancestors. We have separated the issues from the moral, family customs and traditions. We can foresee that if this issue is not resolved then, it will create disorganized family and society because there is no custom and tradition in the family.

[school A/int/19.5.18]

In addition, the journal entries of the participants also show the importance of identifying the issues as the basis of the analysis process. They use the method of exploring to determine the cause of a conflict and to determine the inner and outer character of a character acting in an anti-model play and intervention play. Refer to the following journal entries:

Today I was playing Sarah's role in intervention play. After identifying the traits of Sarah's character in script C (anti-model acting), I find that Sarah's character is not a woman who adheres to customs and eastern values. Sarah wants to marry Farhan without the parents' consent. As a result, in the intervention session, when I acted as Sarah, I was able to shape Sarah's character to women who are concerned with the customs and heritage of the family tradition. I can show Sarah's character differences in an anti-model play and intervention play.

[school A/jur/R4/20.5.18]

Today I was involved in a group discussion before creating an intervention play. I noticed that my group succeeds in comparing and separating the negative traits inherent in Ikhwan's character as a warm-hearted husband with no compassion and a high ego (script D). I separate all the negative attributes inherent in Ikhwan's character and replace it with a positive nature. In the intervention play of script D, I can produce different Ikhwan characters from the anti-model play. Ikhwan's character is now better as a husband who loves his wife and understands the wishes of his wife.

[school B/jur/R1/14.4.18]

The observational results report also show that the participants were able to analyse, compare, contrast, evaluate, and predict the issues presented in the anti-model play whether the issue is relevant to individuals, families, school children, or communities. After that, they can also predict the solution to the issues featured in the anti-model play by giving some reasonable suggestions. All the ideas of the solution were also presented in the forum session. The idea of the solution presented in the forum session was then tested to see its

effectiveness in intervention play. One observer regards intervention play sessions in forum theatre as an experimental laboratory of various alternative solutions submitted by the participants.

[school A/obs/Bnu/23.5.18]

Investigate

The interviews also show that the participants investigated the theme previously provided before authoring the script for the anti-model play. Participants used prior knowledge about the theme given and investigated the importance of the theme in human life. Investigations also continue to determine the importance and relevance of the theme in participants' daily lives. Issues and conflicts related to the theme were played in the anti-model play. Refer to the following interviews:

Researcher: How do you define the appropriate situation for a given theme?

Participant 3:

Our teacher gives a clear theme that is to keep the traditions. Our group has made a little investigation or research on the purpose of this theme. The investigation results show that our task is to create situations that show characters that do not respect our ancestral customs. We have written scripts based on this investigation and played them in the anti-model play.

[school B/int/4.4.18]

Researcher: How can you describe the solution in intervention play?

Participant 6:

We first analyzed the problem shown in the anti-model play be sure to characterize the character that should be changed. We should also assess whether the act of Esah's character is moral duty or not. We find, there is no moral values in Esah's character... then we use ideas...Now Esah should change a character from bad to good. So Esah start to do the good things such organized the workshop to teach the villagers how to sew clothes ... This idea we test in the intervention play.

[school A/int/4.4.18]

In addition, participants' journal entries also pointed out that they first investigated the issues raised in the anti-model play before they determined the issues and solutions to the problem. The participants investigated the cause of the conflict and sought solutions to the conflict. Refer to the following journal entries:

Today I was involved in writing scripts. To do the anti-model script(script E), I used to investigate before looking for issues or conflicts that existed. I find the conflict in this anti-model play is disrespectful friends who

make the same business, for example a business as a tailor. This causes both parties to always fight and disagree. When I acted as Esah in intervention play, I became a character who likes to help the villagers who want to be tailors.

[school B/jur/R6/5.4.18]

Today the forum sessions gave me the opportunity to see and investigate the issues given by a Joker. I noticed that the Joker provided a conflict that was featured in the anti-model play. We have to think high-level as well to compose intervention scripts as it needs to analyse and investigate some things before writing a good script.

[school A/jur/R6/5.4.18]

Observation notes also showed that since the assignment of scripts was given, participants made many investigations to find situations, issues, or conflicts for the anti-model play and alternative solutions to be used for the intervention play. In addition, the actors are also constantly investigating the traits of a person's character, so it is appropriate to describe the character of either the "white character" or the "black character." Inserts also take place to make reforms or interventions from aspects of speech and treatment. The process of analysing and investigating has been conducted by participants in the anti-model play, forum sessions, and intervention play.

[school B/obs/Ban/12.4.18]

Theme 2: Evaluation Level

The findings show that forum theatre can develop thinking skills, especially the level of valuing or evaluation among the participants. Participant can think reasonably and put a moral judgment to the action done by characters in the anti-model play and intervention play. The level of the evaluation is generated by two subthemes, reasoning and judging. The following is an analysis of the findings of the two subthemes that form Theme 2.

Reasoning

The results of the interviews show that participants can reason or make an assessment before composing anti-model acting scripts, considering the appropriate characters for anti-model acting and assessing alternative solutions that should be used in the intervention play. The reviewers consider various factors before generating anti-model play scripts (script D). They can consider appropriate issues to describe the theme of respecting women's rights given by their teachers. Here is the interview.

Researcher: Who gives the original idea to compose script D?

Participant 5:

We all discussed before writing a script. Everyone has an idea. All of these ideas we consider one by one before writing script D so that this script is

appropriate to describe the theme of human rights or respecting the rights of women given by our teachers.

[school B/int/14.4.18]

Participant 6:

After acting an anti-model script, we received many comments from Joker and the audience. They also provide many reasons and suggestions for solving the problem of the husband and wife displayed in the anti-model play (script D). We consider all the reasons and alternatives given to be implemented in the intervention play.

[school A/int/14.4.18]

In addition, participants' journal entries also indicate that they have a level of thought, particularly the level of assessment or evaluation. Participants said they would consider the rationale of action that needs to be taken before composing scripts and acting in the anti-model play and intervention play. Any comments provided in the forum session will also be considered as the solution to the conflicts arising. Refer to the following journal entries:

Today I was involved in writing a script. In my forum session, there was criticism of Ikhwan's character that he beat his wife (anti-model script D) because his wife did not provide food for the husband who came home from work. I consider this situation to find the best solution to be implemented in the intervention play.

[school B/jur/R2/5.4.18]

Today I acted as a good husband (Ikhwan) in the intervention play. Before that, I also considered the situation of the husband beating his wife. Among the aspects to consider is the cause of the non-cooking wife, the way he treats husbands and husbands to blame for the wife, and so on. After considering all the factors, I am looking for the best solution. That's why I can play a good husband's role in the intervention play.

[school A/jur/R3/5.4.18]

The observation notes show what participants take into consideration before writing scripts, choosing appropriate characters for anti-model acting, and casting the intervention play. Additionally, the values that must be present in the character, speech, and behavioural aspects of the character were also considered for writing dialogue in acting. In a forum session, for example, the Joker provided assessment or evaluation questions to examine the level of thought of the participants. Proposed responses and proposed solutions provided in forum sessions were assessed and considered by participants before being considered as the absolute solution to be used in the intervention play. It turns out that assessment and judgment aspects were used before implementing and administering script development sessions, forum sessions, anti-model play, and intervention play sessions.

[school B/obs/Ban/18.5.18]

Judge

The interview results show that participants can judge, estimate, or carefully calculate the anti-model play, issues that appear in the play, and assess all proposed solutions submitted in the forum session. After assessing the issues and situations that were appropriate for writing anti-model acting scripts, the participants played the script in the form of an anti-model play and intervention play. Refer to the following interviews:

Researcher: In a forum session, why are your groups criticizing Esah's character (script E)?

Participant 2:

In the anti-model acting, we find that Esah is a negative character that needs to be changed. We made an assessment of the issues that existed in the anti-model play. That's why we criticize the attitude of Esah's character in the forum session. We made a moral judgment that Senah's character should be turned to a positive character in the intervention play.

Researcher: You mentioned the moral judgment. What does this mean?

Participant 1:

We mean that, as a viewer we can judge and punish the character acting in the anti-model play. For example, we judge Esah's character as a negative character and needs to be changed in the intervention play. Esah's character is an immoral character...therefore, the attitude of this character needs to be changed to a better character.

[school B/int/14.4.18]

In the meantime, the journal entries of participants also show that they make judgments based on several criteria through review and criticism. Refer to the following journal entry of a participant in this study:

Today I was involved in a forum session. In the forum session, I criticized the character of Esah (script E) as an irresponsible character because he likes to make a slander against Senah's character. The attitude of Esah's character who loves to slander that Senah has black magic and she uses a *bomoh* is an immoral attitude. Therefore, I propose that the envy of Esah is changed to a more professional attitude.

[school B/jur/R4/15.6.18]

One of the participants also disputed in his journal entries:

I admit Farhan's character attitude (script C) as a son who is not good at honouring parents and maintaining family image. In this anti-model play, I do not like Farhan's character. If I became Farhan's father, I would not forgive Farhan, for he had dropped a family image. Farhan was married to Sara without the parents' knowledge.

[school A/jur/R4/15.6.18]

The observation notes also showed that participants made judgments and assessments about the proposals presented in the forum session. The observation notes also show the participants assessing the issues featured in the anti-model acting and making judgments about the solutions performed in the intervention play session. Attitudes to judging characters' acting in an anti-model session can help them to perform better and perfect their acting in intervention plays. Overall, forum theatre techniques can develop thinking skills. Participants might make judgments before making a decision to resolve an issue.

[school B/obs/Nad/3.4.18]

Theme 3: Creation Level

Elements such as developing a script, anti-model play, and intervention play create an opportunity for participants to be innovative and creative. The results show that forum theatre can develop thinking skills, especially the level of creativity among the participants. The creation level theme is generated by two subthemes, planning and generating. The following is an analysis of the findings of the two subthemes that make up Theme 3.

Planning

The results of the interview show that the participants can design the anti-model play's script framework, the situation, the Joker's question, and the intervention play's framework for the script. Before they design the form of the anti-model script framework, the participants studied the theme provided to find out the needs of the theme so that the script created met the means to the theme provided. Refer to the following interviews:

Researcher: What is the first step in writing anti-model and interventions play scripts?

Participant 3:

Our group will plan to get issues that match the theme given. Then we will create a script template that will be composed. Script sketches are important for writing storylines so that they are not out of the theme. Scripture spans are also important to determine the amount of characters needed to play the storyline. We need to design all this before writing an anti-model script.

[school B/int/13.4.18]

Participant 6:

In addition, planning is also important for us to determine the characters that will act in the anti-model play and intervention play. Character attitudes and dialogue that fit the character attitude should also be considered so that the dialogue can describe the situation to be displayed.

[school A/int/13.4.18]

Journal entries also show before the forum session that the Joker will design some questions to be presented to the audience as a way to stimulate

their thinking. The Joker's questions are probes, which are important to stimulate the idea of an important solution to the conflicts presented in the anti-model play. In addition, participants also plan ways to handle the anti-model and intervention plays from the number of actors and the number of solutions or ideas that can be put forward in intervention casting. Refer to the following journal entries:

Today I was involved in a discussion with my group. As a head, I plan our group's work. We will design agendas and events that must be included in order to fit the theme. Planning for writing an anti-model acting storyline and intervention acting is also carried out by our group. We manage to plan our script and action plan for our play.

[school B/Jur/R6/15.3.18]

Today I acted as Esah. Esah is one of the characters in the intervention play. Before acting in the intervention play, I was prepared with some strategies such as ways to take over the role of the negative character. I have used such action and dialogue as designed to act it out in the anti-model play. So I can act well in the intervention play.

[school A/Jur/R6/15.3.18]

The observation report also shows that participants were planning nearly from the time of writing anti-model scripts how to curb anti-model acting, the number of characters involved, characters capable of describing conflicts in anti-model acting, how to handle forum sessions, and the number of solutions that can be put into intervention casting. These plans are among the most important aspects of creativity.

[school B/obs/Ban/12.4.18]

Generate

The interview results show that the participants were able to generate acting scripts, anti-model acting, forum session questions, and intervention plays that showed an alternative solution to the problems posed in the anti-model play. The researcher produced an acting script based on a given theme. Refer to the following interviews:

Participant 6:

We generate script E based on the theme of freedom of speech. We need to generate a situation that points to the issue that although there is freedom to speak out, the voice needs to benefit the human being.

Researcher: Can you give us more detail?

Participant 5:

We mean that we can show in an anti-model play that, even if we have the right to give an opinion, we cannot use this opportunity to censure, defame, or abuse someone. That is why we have a situation in the most problematic

business world as a result of jealousy and envy. The attitude of Esah, who likes to make slander, should not be emulated by society.

[school B/int/24.5.18]

The participants' journal entries also show that the participants generated themes to fit the scripts, generated an anti-model play, depicted the conflicts expected in the script, generated situations that fit the given theme, generated forum session questions, generated creative solutions to address issues or conflicts, and rebuilt the storyline and solution that should be played in the intervention casting session. Refer to the following journal entries:

Today I was involved in writing the script. For me, forum sessions and anti-model plays can stimulate me to generate ideas for writing scripts, generate situations, anti-model plays, and create acting in intervention plays. I'm happy to give new ideas that can be used and acted in an intervention play...this idea was successful, too.

[school B/jur/R6/25.5.18]

I was told to generate ideas on how to deal with Ikhwan's character problem (script D). Ikhwan's character is a hot-tempered husband. I generated and transformed this character into a positive character in the intervention play. I managed to role-play Ikhwan's character as a husband who understands the wife's heart as an alternative way to the conflict that is featured in the anti-model play.

[school A/jur/R6/25.5.18]

The observation report also shows participants of this study generating anti-model casting, generating characters for anti-model acting, asking for a forum session conducted by the Joker, incorporating ideas submitted in the forum session, and summarizing solutions to resolve conflicts. The participants also restructured negative characters in anti-model acting to play a role as positive characters in the intervention play. This generation aspect has become an important feature in the mind of creation and creativity.

[school A/obs/Ati/13.6.18]

DISCUSSION

The four steps in the forum theatre stimulate aspects of problem solving and the ability to make judgments before making decisions, and they trigger critical and creative thinking. The participants showed that they were practicing analysing skills whereby they managed to break down the information from the anti-model play to understand the moral dilemma. They made their stance stronger with justification and evidence from their journal entries and interviews. They used techniques such as investigating, identifying issues, inference, providing justification, and speculating to analyse the anti-model play. Their thoughts and opinions were justified and explained in a forum

session and when they developed a script. Hence, the evidence above shows that the participants practice analysis skills in their thinking.

Furthermore, it can be seen that all of the students managed to handle and evaluate the good and the bad of the characters in the anti-model and intervention plays. Participants can reason or make an assessment before composing anti-model acting scripts, considering the appropriate characters for anti-model acting and assessing alternative solutions that should be used in the intervention play. The participants can judge, estimate, or carefully calculate issues that appear in the anti-model play and assess all proposed solutions submitted in the forum session. After assessing the issues and situations that were appropriate for writing anti-model acting scripts, the participants played the script in the form of an anti-model and intervention play well. Their arguments in the forum session were just, well argued, and had good reasoning supported and defended. The participants' ability to defend, argue, counter argue, conclude, and explain was the tool in thinking on the evaluation level.

All the participants managed to create a good moral dilemma script. Participants could design the anti-model play's script framework, the situation, the Joker's question, and the intervention play's framework of the script. Before they designed the form of anti-model script framework, the participants studied the theme provided to find out the needs of the theme so that the script met the means to the theme provided. They were able to generate acting scripts, anti-model acting, forum session questions, and intervention plays that showed an alternative solution to the problems posed in the anti-model play. All of them practiced creation skills whereby they created a script, an anti-model play, and an intervention play to bring the play to a different and improved ending. They justified the play they recreated (intervention play) using details from the values of their society and knowledge of their religion. This shows that HOTS were utilized.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of Chang (1998, 2007) and Colby and Kohlberg (2011) that responses to structured situations by pupils (in the context of this study, four steps in forum theatre) expand the level of moral judgment and reasoning of the students. Forum theatre is able to develop the aspects of moral thought, thinking skills, and reasoning of Form 4 students. This study is also in line with the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013–2025), which has aspirations that students should be creative and innovative so they can generate new possibilities and create new ideas or knowledge to fulfil the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

The present findings show the potential of forum theatre to promote and develop students' thinking skills on a higher level. With the present urgent need for the mastery of HOTS, teachers need all the help they can get in terms of ideas and resources. This will assist them to exhibit creativity and fun in class. This is what forum theatre offers—engaging activities and the ability to

promote HOTS among students. Therefore, this study suggests that forum theatre with various techniques and elements of the dramatic experience can be used as moral education pedagogy to enhance HOTS.

This study shows that forum theatre can develop the aspects of thinking skills and the level of thinking of Form 4moral education students. Forum theatre techniques provide opportunities for students to be aware, to see things critically, to find solutions to moral conflicts, and to develop as prospective citizens with a positive moral attitude. Overall, with this technique, pupils can apply knowledge and thinking skills such analysing, evaluating, creating, reasoning, and reflecting to solve problems, make decisions, innovate, and create something (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). The findings of this study reveal that various theatrical activities underpinned in the four elements of forum theatre—(i) writing a script, (ii) anti-model play, (iii) forum session, and (iv) intervention play—show the development of students’ thinking skills such as analysing, evaluating, and creating. Therefore, it is clear that forum theatre can generate students’ HOTS.

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